



Quality transportation through people who make a difference

Idaho Transportation Department

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"Click It, Don't Risk It!" campaign begins Monday (Nov. 14)

BOISE - Motorists will have an extra incentive to buckle up beginning Monday (Nov. 14), when a safety campaign including stepped-up enforcement and education gets under way. The Idaho State Police, Idaho Transportation Department and about 30 local law enforcement agencies are participating in the "Click It, Don't Risk It!" seat belt campaign.

The increased patrols and an advertising campaign, which continue through Dec. 5, are aimed at saving lives and reducing costs associated with traffic crashes. Idaho law requires everyone in a vehicle to wear safety restraints regardless of where they are seated.

"Our goal is to reduce the tragic, unnecessary deaths and serious injuries that happen every day in Idaho," says Mary Hunter of the transportation department. "We hope these efforts will keep more families intact, so they can enjoy the upcoming holidays."

Buckling up remains the single best defense against serious injury or death for you and your passengers if you are involved in a crash, Hunter adds.

Last year in Idaho, 552 people who were killed or seriously injured in motor vehicle crashes were not wearing seat belts. Even those who survive crashes can suffer the consequences of their injuries for the rest of their lives.

"It is especially important for adults to set a good example for younger family members," Hunter says. "Last year, Idaho lost 25 teens in traffic crashes, and two out of three were not buckled up."

Safety belts reduce fatalities among passenger car occupants by 45 percent, and by 60 percent in light trucks, according to the American Journal of Preventative Medicine. In Idaho, 80 percent of people buckle up in cars, vans and sport utility vehicles, while just 63 percent of pickup occupants buckle up.

"Click It, Don't Risk It!" campaign messages will emphasize the importance of buckling up every time for every trip. Radio ads will feature local law enforcement officers encouraging people to use seat belts.

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 85 percent of all crash victims' medical costs fall on society, not the individuals involved. Medicare, Medicaid and other taxpayer-funded sources pay one quarter of those medical costs. Crash victims who are buckled up average 60-80 percent lower hospital costs than those who were not wearing seat belts.

"The seat belt is a free piece of safety equipment. Of all the safety features added to vehicles since 1960, one - the safety belt - accounts for more than half of all lives saved, according to NHTSA," Hunter adds